(d) if so, to what extent, India and U.S. have finally decided to obtain nuclear energy from U.S. and also aircraft deal; and

(e) whether India is satisfied with agreements reached?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) During the External Affairs Minister's visit to Washington D.C. on 13-14 April, 2005, the India-U.S. Energy Dialogue has been announced which would be led by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, and the US Energy Secretary Smauel Bodman. The main components of this dialogue would include civil nuclear energy, hydrocarbons and cleaner technologies. These are positive developments and we are hopeful that the Dialogue would lead to greater cooperation in the areas identified.

(c) On March 25, 2005, the US Under Secretary for Defence communicated approval for US companies to respond to the Indian Request for Information (RFI) for the Multi Role Combat Aircraft tender.

(d) & (e) The subject matters are under discussion and no decisions have yet been made. Government will take decisions on matters related to nuclear energy and defence based on India's national interest.

Liberal visa regime between India and Russia

3761. DR. KARAN SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia has called for more liberal visa regime with India and has suggested an arrangement similar to what it has with France and Italy;

(b) whether this issue was discussed during the Russian Foreign Minister's visit to India in October, 2004;

(c) if so, whether any agreement in this regard has been reached; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir. Russia has proposed a more liberal visa regime with India.

(b) The issue of facilitating travel by Indian nationals, including businessmen, students and tourists has been taken up by the Government

of India with the Government of Russian Federation. The issue was discussed by the External Affairs Minister with the Foreign Minister of Russia Federation H.E. Sergei V. Lavrov in October 2004 during his visit to New Delhi.

(c) and (d) Discussions on the issue between the two governments are continuing.

India-Nepal discussion on mutual interest

3762. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a)whether it is a fact that recently, India and Nepal have discussed security-related issues of mutual interest;

(b)whether any final outcome was there; and

(c)if so, the details thereof and by when the outcome is expected to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) There is a regular dialogue between India and Nepal at various levels on issues of mutual concern and interest including security related issues. A network of institutional mechanisms comprising Home Secretary-level talks, Joint Working Group on Border Management, Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues and District Coordination Committees has been evolved to jointly address various security related issues including maintenance of peace and security and prevention of criminal activities in the India-Nepal border areas. The two sides have also finalised the texts of a new Extradition Treaty and an Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. Conclusion of these agreements will strengthen the bilateral legal framework for security cooperation.

Hosting of conference on federalism based federal system by India

†3763. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have offered to host the conference on federalism based federal system to be held in 2007/08;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.